

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	New Jersey
COUNTY:	Middlesex
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	DEC 4 1973

1. NAME

COMMON:
Matthias Smock House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
off River Road (map 15)

CITY OR TOWN:
Piscataway Township

STATE:
New Jersey

CODE: 34 COUNTY: Middlesex

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both		

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Dr. and Mrs. Paul Jennings

STREET AND NUMBER:
River Road

CITY OR TOWN:
Piscataway

STATE:
New Jersey

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
National Bank of New Jersey

STREET AND NUMBER:
George Street

CITY OR TOWN:
New Brunswick

STATE:
New Jersey

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
HABS-NJ-178

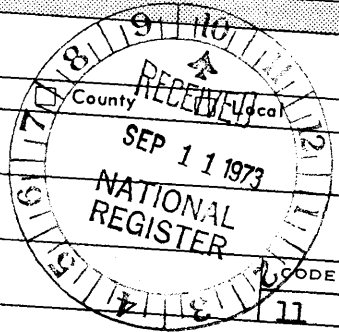
DATE OF SURVEY:
1938

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:
Washington

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE:
D.C.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

2518
N 4485820

STATE: New Jersey

COUNTY: Middlesex

ENTRY NUMBER: 34

DATE: DEC 4 1973

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. Condition

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

"The original section of the house was built by Matthias Smock about 1718-1721 (Bailey's Book), and added to probably by his son, John Smock. Like most early houses it faces south regardless of the position of the road, which in this case runs along the west end. The west unit, comprising more than half of the present house, includes the hallway; above the main floor is another story under the eaves, with 'lie on your stomach' windows seen from the rear view. The east unit has not these additional low windows. The two sections of the house are clearly seen from the rear view, due to this difference in windows and also to the separate clapboarding of the two parts. The house is covered by a gable roof, unbroken in back by dormers. The front of the house...has been conservatively modernized and the grounds well planted."

The entire house is constructed on a hand hewn white oak frame with pegged joints. Floors are original wide pine boards through out. The exterior walls are white clapboard filled with mud, clay and straw. Three outbuildings are present of the property: 1) A small wooden frame smoke house used presently as a woodshed, 2) A two story carriage house which is used as a garage 3) A very small well house located across from the carriage house.

Restoration 1950 - 1971

- 1) Kitchen and bathroom modernized by Dr. and Mrs. William Cole in 1950. Fireplace in kitchen discovered at that time and authentically restored. Original crane found.
- 2) Removal of entrance porch added 1900 - 1920 and shown on HABS blue prints and marked "a later addition". This was done May 1965 on the recommendation of Harley J. McKee, School of Architecture, Syracuse University - Consultant to HABS. The front door was replaced by a raised 6 panelled door which was reproduced using the blueprints of an original interior door as a pattern.
- 3) Restoration of living room and library under the supervision of historical architect, Loring McMillan, Director of Richmondtown Restoration, Staten Island, New York. January - April 1969

Details of Restoration

Living Room

1. Removed mantel restoring original dimensions of fireplace, and replaced with hand crafted raised panelled wall. Chimney wall had obviously been prepared for panelling although it had never been completed. The paneling was copied from the original living room door.
2. Exposed original painted beams.
3. Exposed original wide pine flooring.
4. Restored chair-rail using original molding under window as patter.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. Significance

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1720

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The primary significance of the Matthias Smock house is that it represents a carefully preserved and authentically restored example of early Dutch colonial architecture. Much of the architecture of the early 18th century which has been preserved and restored represents examples of public buildings or prestigious homes of wealthy and politically significant colonists. This house was the dwelling of a farmer and his family demonstrating the life style of the middle class colonist. Built by Matthias Smock in 1720, it is the earliest documented house in Middlesex County (McCormick - History of River Road Area). Records reveal that Matthias Smock moved from New Utrecht to a farm of 130 acres in Piscataway in 1718. Tax records on file in the State House at Trenton, N.J., show that taxes were paid on this land by Matthias Smock in 1718 and 1719, and in 1720 he paid taxes on the house as well. The Will of Matthias Smock bequeths "his lands and chattles in the County and Province of East Jersey" to his wife, Elizabeth Smock.

Matthias lived in the house until his death in 1727 when his second son, John Smock, inherited it and lived in it until his death in 1791. John also mentions the house in his will drawn in 1734. He added the East wing in 1750. John was surveyor of highways in 1749 and town clerk in 1767.

The Reparations List on record in Trenton shows that the British troops pillaged this farm during the Revolution and the losses amounted to 140 pounds. The importance of River Road - known in 1684 as the "Great Road up the Raritan" - in American history is clearly indicated in the "History of the River Road Area" written by Dr. Richard P. McCormick, well-known historian of Rutgers University. Dr. McCormick includes this house on his list of "some sites that are deserving of historic markers in the River Road Area". This area was an important pre-Revolutionary trade center and was the scene of many skirmishes and much pillaging during the war. Independence Day 1778 was celebrated by Washington and his troops on River Road.

The Matthias Smock House remained in the Smock family until 1910.

CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATION

Harrison Williams, Clifford Case - U.S. Senators
Edward J. Patten - Congressman, 15th district

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bailey, Rosalie Fellows, Pre-Revolutionary Dutch Houses and Families in Northern New Jersey and Southern New York; William Morrow and Co., N.Y., 1936 p. 392.
 McCormick, "History of River Road Area"
 Tax Records, Trenton
 Will - Matthias Smock, No. 521, Middlesex County
 Reparations List - Trenton

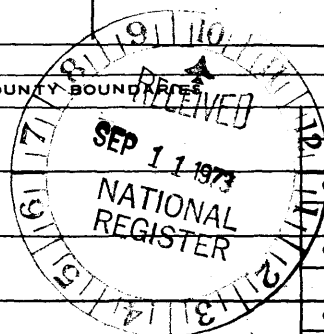
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		40° 31' 26"	74° 29' 20"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1 1/2 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Staff, Historic Sites Office, Dr. and Mrs. P. Jennings, Lois Richman, Historian

ORGANIZATION: Department of Environmental Protection, State of N.J. DATE: March, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER: John Fitch Plaza, Box 1420

CITY OR TOWN: Trenton STATE: New Jersey CODE: 34

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

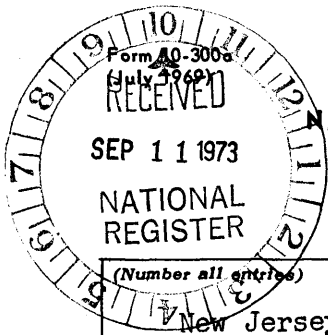
National State Local (Act 15)

Name: Richard J. Sullivan
 Title: Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection
 Date: September 6, 1973

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert Van Utley
~~State Liaison Officer and Historic Preservation~~
 Associate Director, Professional Services
 Date: 12/4/73

ATTEST:
Charles Attorneys
 Keeper of The National Register
 Date: 11-30-73



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)
(1)

STATE	
New Jersey	
COUNTY	
Middlesex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	DEC 4 1973

New Jersey 34
Middlesex 023
Smock House

7. Condition continued

5. Restored iron hardware with early thumb latches and H and L hinges similar to that found on original door.
6. Removed radiators and risers and replaced with electric baseboard heat.

Library

1. Removed mantel and restored as original with plaster.
2. Removed machine made molding around cupboards over fireplace.
3. Exposed original wide pine flooring.
4. Restored chair-rail.
5. Cleaned and restored original hardware on doors.
6. Removed radiators and risers and replaced with electric baseboard heat.
7. Restored plaster and left observation window showing mud, clay and straw wall construction.

Dining Room - Restored and Redecorated in 1964

1. Removed "false" Victorian mantel and exposed tongue in groove pine wall.

Bedrooms - Redecorated and Restored in 1964

1. Removed radiators and replaced with electric baseboard heat.
2. Replaced reproduction hardware with early thumb latches and strap hinges on all batten doors and thumb latches and H hinges on closet doors.
3. Reopened back stairway in bedroom over kitchen. September 1963.